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The Hilltop 2-13-2008

Hilltop Staff

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WEATHER**50**
29**Tomorrow:****47**
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1924**THE HILLTOP**

The Daily Student Voice of Howard University

VOLUME 91, NO. 81

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Wednesday, February 13, 2008

Wednesday
Notebook**BREAKING NEWS****THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO DISMISS LAWSUITS AGAINST COMPANIES THAT DID BUSINESS WITH SOUTH AFRICA DURING APARTHEID, ACCORDING TO CNN.****CAMPUS****TUITION COSTS ARE ON THE RISE FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR AS UNIVERSITY IMPROVEMENTS AND UPGRADES CONTINUE.****BIZ & TECH****THE SUBPRIME MORTGAGE CRISIS MAY CAUSE STRICTER GUIDELINES AND HIGHER INTEREST RATES ON STUDENT LOANS.**

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General Assembly Meeting to Discuss AmendmentBY SHIVONNE FOSTER
Staff Writer

The General Assembly meeting scheduled for today will serve as an opportunity for student government representatives to vote on a pending amendment. If approved, the amendment may go on to be petitioned.

If the amendment is put into effect, the Policy Board will consist of 12 members from the university's schools and colleges selected by the Howard University Student Association (HUSA) president.

The members will not only be appointed by the president, but also must be approved by the Constitutional Review Committee and the General

Assembly before serving. The change is geared to eliminate any unforeseen conflicts of interest.

Currently, representatives from schools and colleges sit on the Policy Board. The change is proposed to avoid conflicts of interest that occur on the board.

At last week's meeting, the Chief of Compliance position was tabled indefinitely. If acted on, this position would have allowed a student to ensure that student government leaders are complying with rules and guidelines. But the powers once sought to be given to the officer could now rest in the hands of the Policy Board.

If student representatives are not validated or do not reach certain GPA requirements, the Of-

fice of Student Activities brings these concerns to attention by identifying names of students who are not complying.

Victoria Kirby, Chairwoman of General Assembly, said a Chief of Compliance position would serve as a liaison between Student Activities and General Assembly.

Some student representatives believe the original proposition, which called the position an Attorney General, was poorly constructed.

"A lot of things were wrong with the original proposition, but that doesn't mean the intentions were wrong," said Nnamdi Anozie, College of Arts and Sciences General Assembly representative and public relations chair of the Undergraduate Student

Assembly (UGSA). Many student leaders believed the position would allow too much power to one individual.

Anozie described giving one student power to moderate compliance as "unsettling," saying, "I didn't feel any student should have that power since we are all human beings."

He said personal relationships may get in the way of the position.

To make the power less centralized, the appointed policy board may be responsible for overseeing compliance to the HUSA constitution.

"The idea we're working on now is to give

> See **Chief**, Page 2

Kenya Downs canvasses with Barack Obama supporters during Tuesday's Potomac primary.

Obama Sweeps, Students ActivateBY VANESSA ROZIER
Nation & World Editor

Amid below-freezing temperatures and frozen rain, dozens of Howard students joined hundreds of area residents Tuesday to make a difference and to prove that they are no longer complacent.

Kenya Downs was one of them. Planning to fly home to Milwaukee next weekend to cast her ballot, Downs dressed in layers and trucked in the bad weather through Washington, D.C. neighborhoods to make sure all registered Democrats were making it out to the voting booths.

"Hopefully we can influence other people to make a difference in the community," Downs, a junior speech communications major, said. "Apathy is a big problem. But if we can show that we're good for something, it's a bandwagon they are going to want to jump on."

On her way to canvass the neighborhoods, Randell Jones said, "I don't want to con-

sider myself as part of those people regarded as complacent."

Jones, a sophomore advertising major, has been religiously giving her time and energy to the Obama campaign as she went to South Carolina with more than 100 other Howard students last month.

"This is too much of an important time," she said. "This is something that people 50 years ago would never have thought would happen."

Members of Washington, D.C. for Barack Obama organized Tuesday's rally, bringing together about 600 area residents to vote for the Illinois senator, and their hard work paid off.

Obama won 75 percent of the Washington, D.C. vote, 64 percent of the Virginia vote and 61 percent of the Maryland vote Tuesday, putting him in the lead of pledged delegates for

> See **Primary**, Page 3**Candidates Present Platforms, Hear Concerns at Speak Out**BY ALEESA MAN
Staff Writer

The candidates answered rounds of questions concerning their experience, abilities and plans in office before an audience of students who will soon be casting their vote for who they want in office at Tuesday's College of Arts and Sciences (COAS) Speak Out.

"The purpose of the event was so the candidates could get their platforms out to the student body, and the student body has the chance to question some of the stuff they see on the candidates' platforms," said host Brittany Lanier, a senior psychology and African-American studies double major and COAS Local Elections Chair.

Lanier continued, "I hope that the students take away from this a better understanding of where the candidates stand on their respective issues, and I hope that the candidates take away from this the fact that the Arts and Sciences student body is serious about who is in charge of the student council."

Students running for positions in the class board, Undergraduate Student Assembly (UGSA) and the Executive Board each had an opportunity to share their views on what they should do in office, and were then able to answer questions from the audience.

Although the candidates had a unique stance on what should be done in office, new and better programming seemed to be a popular theme.

Jerome Joseph, a sophomore biology major running for UGSA representative, proposed plans for a biomedical symposium and a male mentor initiative.

Kristen Price, a sophomore political science major running for class of 2010 president, spoke of hosting a gradu-

ate school forum.

Bryan Smart, a sophomore political science major seeking to be COAS president, proposed plans for continuing the B.E.S.T. Lecture series, a program that was part of a past platform.

"We borrowed the B.E.S.T. lecture series," Smart said. "We thought it would be a great idea for students to be able to see African Americans in their particular field that have made it. This way, we can encourage students, because once you get to college, you kind of lose sight of your goals, so we want to make sure we implement the lecture series so they can remain focused."

Communication was also a common factor among the candidates' platforms. Many of the office seekers spoke about creating transparency in UGSA and keeping the lines of communication between UGSA and the student body open.

Pierre Whatley, a freshman economics major running for a position as UGSA representative, spoke of having bi-monthly reports issued concerning the functions of UGSA.



Tyronne Clemens - Staff Photographer

Student in the COAS met the candidates at Tuesday's speak out.

Strike Has Ended, Writers Guild Lays Down PicketsBY DANIELLE KWATENG
Life & Style Editor

Three months of no paychecks, picketing and arguing and The Writers Guild of America East and West voted (92.5 percent) Tuesday to end their strike. Their next vote will be to either accept or reject the contract offered by the Alliance of Motion Pictures and Television Producers

(AMPTP), which would give writers a share of the digital revenues, such as DVDs and Web content, from the productions they work on.

Patrick M. Verrone, president of the Writers Guild of America, West, released a statement saying, "The strike is over. Our membership has voted, and writers can go back to work. This was not a strike we wanted, but

one we had to conduct in order to win jurisdiction and establish appropriate residuals for writing in new media and on the Internet. Those advances now give us a foothold in the digital age. Rather than being shut out of the future of content creation and delivery, writers will lead the way as TV migrates to the Internet and platforms for new media are developed."

The strike was primarily against AMPTP, which represents 397 American film and television producers, including NBC Corporation, Walt Disney Corporation and NBC Universal. The writers, about 12,000, have suffered strains to both their pride and their pockets. But the writers still feel, after three months, it was all worth it.

"Writers are treated like

[expletive] in reality," said James Check, a graduate student of film.

Check said the strike was just and was worth the struggle. "What they're fighting about now is not so much the way the industry is now," he said. "They're fighting about the future of the industry, because what they've seen...what everyone has seen is how technology is changing the

film industry....Film is going to be distributed on the Internet. And those distributing...will be wide open [for revenue]. The way it is now, writers would be blocked out from getting any returns on the projects they've worked on. Producers didn't want to give that up."

Standing strong, many

> See **Strike**, Page 3**INDEX****Campus 2****Editorials & Perspectives 4 & 5****Life & Style 6****Biz & Tech 7**

Tuition Rises, Campus Improvements Continue

BY TRAVER RIGGINS
Campus Editor

Most students will see around a 7.5 percent increase in tuition for the 2008-2009 school year.

Each year, the university increases tuition rates to keep pace with expenses and inflation, Howard University Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer Sidney Evans explained to a group of student leaders Tuesday.

"It only makes up 20 percent of what it takes to pay the bills and we give away 25 cents of every dollar we charge," Evans said. "Those are the two main reasons we have to increase tuition."

One quarter of tuition and

fee collection goes toward university-funded scholarships, which amount to \$42 million, and next year that number will increase to \$46 million.

More significant increases in tuition began last year in an attempt to play catch up in tuition prices. Historically, the university has avoided following suit with tuition increases made by similar institutions. Over the past decade, there have been years in which tuition increased less than 3 percent below the average increase of private institutions until the 2003-2004 academic year.

With the increase to \$14,020 for undergraduates, Howard's tuition remains lower than area schools like the University of

Maryland and Georgetown University and also other historically black colleges and universities like Spelman College.

Although Howard is identified as a private institution, it receives a sizable federal appropriation — 40 percent of the annual budget — which could account for the below average tuition increases, Evans said.

He said that a reliance on the federal appropriation may have influenced the decision to keep costs low for students, but as initiative is taken to address lingering problems that require funds, tuition prices have to increase to make up for lacking monies.

"Howard has a huge deferred maintenance backlog,"

Evans said. "It's come to a point where Howard has to start fixing these buildings."

The tuition increase will account for an additional \$7 million, but around \$38 million has been budgeted for special projects of the next year: \$20 million for deferred maintenance projects like fixing bathrooms and classrooms along with other building issues, \$5 million to improve excellence in the health sciences, \$5 million to recruit top-notch faculty and \$8 million for faculty salary.

Within the past few years, the university has applied to a two-tier plan for tuition increases with continuing students receiving a lower base tuition than first and second year students. The two-tier

system also applies to the percentage increase for most graduate programs, but not to undergraduates who will see a similar percentage increase in prices.

The objective is to increase revenue without putting committed students in a situation where the education costs more than they originally expected. The Colleges of Medicine and Dentistry and the Schools of Pharmacy and Law will see a more dramatic increase of 15 percent, 40 percent of which will directly aid the schools.

Other increases approved by the board follow suit with the tuition increase. The housing rate will increase by 7 percent.

Food services will receive an additional 6 percent but over the

next nine months, \$1.5 million will be spent to improve food service facilities. The Restaurant in Blackburn is evidence of the beginning of the improvements.

More important to Evans than the increase in tuition is the danger the university faces in enrollment as schools like Harvard and Yale Universities have pledged to give full rides to middle class students who otherwise could not afford to attend their schools.

This could mean that less affluent black students would choose to attend a majority university and not have to come out of pocket for an otherwise lofty tuition fee, rather than attend Howard, which has lower prices but an inability to offer free tuition to students.

Bond Denied Again for Okoh

BY ANNIE WHITE
Editorial Assistant

Joseph Okoh was denied an appeal to be released on bond by Louisa County, Va. Circuit Court Judge Timothy Sanner Monday.



File Photo

Okoh's appeal to be released on bond in a hearing Monday was denied for the second time.

The Howard men's soccer coach was charged with soliciting sex from a minor over the Internet two weeks ago.

Okoh is being held without bond because of his exposure to children, his lack of ties to the Louisa community and the hard evidence bolstering the charges.

A preliminary hearing is scheduled on March 6 at 11 a.m. in the Louisa General District Court. Contrary to previous reports, Okoh could serve a minimum of 10 years and maximum of 30 years, and could also be tagged with a \$2,500 fine.

"We are very satisfied with [the] ruling of the Circuit Court upholding the decision made by the General District

Court last week," said Louisa Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Rusty McGuire, who served on the Youth Internet Safety Task Force in a press release.

"The issue of bond in these cases was discussed at length last year in Attorney General Bob McDonnell's Youth Internet Safety Task Force," McGuire said in the statement. "The task force unanimously recommended legislation that the General Assembly passed amending Virginia Code Section 19.2-120, creating a presumption of no bond in these types of cases."

McGuire and Commonwealth Attorney Tom Garrett are the prosecuting attorneys trying the case.

Okoh was arrested Jan. 31 for soliciting what he thought was a 13-year-old online and attempting to have a sexual encounter with the teen, who turned out to be an undercover deputy working as part of a special task force whose goal is to protect children from child pornographers, sexual predators and other criminals on the Internet.

"Down to every last parent, teacher and mentor, we must all do our part to ensure that the Internet is not turned against our children through the evils of sexual enticement, abuse and child pornography," former U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said in a report issued by the task force.

LIFE @ THE MECCA

Chicagoan Continues to Adjust to Howard Life



Photos courtesy of Jasmine Bramlett

In her second year, Jasmine Bramlett is slowly adjusting to Howard culture.

BY CRYSTAL J. ALLEN
Copy Editor

"What am I gonna do?"

This was the first question that filled Jasmine Bramlett's mind when she stepped off the plane from Chicago into Ronald Reagan Airport on Aug. 19, 2006, Howard's move-in day for new residents.

She knew she was about to embark on a new journey of life, and the fear of being so far from home had finally begun to set in. Her parents were with her, but not for long. Once she stepped onto Howard's campus, she would officially be a Bison — headstrong and independent.

Attending Howard was not always in Bramlett's plans, but going to college was definitely enforced in her household.

Her mother, a single parent, often told her, "You won't live in my house without a college education." But Bramlett knew she had to attend college in order to be successful in today's society.

She said her pre-Howard mentality was, "Either I be a loser, working in fast food or in retail for the rest of my life, or I go to college to start a career and live the good life."

Her first choice was the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which was close to home.

Bramlett said she chose the university because she knew it was a good school, and family members were attending.

Her other options included Spelman College and Clark Atlanta University. However, after visiting the Mecca, she decided Howard was the school for her.

Since her arrival at Howard, Bramlett has become affiliated with campus organizations such as Chicago People's Union (CPU).

She also participates in various community service activities, such as Kid Power, where she serves as both a tutor and mentor to children from ages 7 to 13. She also volunteers at NCBA Estates, an elderly home, where she keeps the residents company.

As a broadcast journalism major in her sophomore year, Bramlett has managed to maintain a cumulative 3.3 GPA.

On the Howard experience,

Bramlett said she does enjoy the university, "but there are times when it's a little overrated." She said she has noticed that many people conform to different trends and fads once they come to Howard.

Although she admits that she, too, has conformed to a few things, Bramlett said she "still holds down Chi-town."

Being hundreds of miles away from home, there were many adjustments she had to make during freshman year.

As an only child, Bramlett's first major adjustment was sharing space with a roommate in the Harriet Tubman Quadrangle.

"First semester, it was horrible," Bramlett said. "For one, my roommate was nasty...the room smelled. She would leave and return in the wee hours of the morning. And on top of that, she wore my clothes — sneakers, underwear, shirts, everything."

After she made the discovery that her roommate was not who Bramlett thought she was, she had her room changed. And although she lost one roommate and friend, she gained two more.

"My second pair of roommates was the best thing that could have ever happened to me," Bramlett said. "At first, I thought it was bad because I was going to have two roommates instead of one, but it was great. I loved my roomies. We shared things...we had late-night talks."

Now living in Meridian Hill Hall, Bramlett has a room to herself. And although she misses her roommates, she admits that having a single room does have its perks. "You don't have to worry about people coming in and out, and you have more space, more time to be to yourself," she said.

Overall, she has learned a lot from Howard. She admits that she wasted a lot of "unnecessary time during freshman year, doing nothing," but she plans to become more active and get more involved in campus activities.

"I just plan to get as much out of it [the Howard experience] while I'm here, and to make it to the top while I'm here," Bramlett said. "Everything after should just fall into place."



AllAfrica I. Carlier - Photo Editor

Dennis Askew (left), William North IV (center), and Tomi Oluwatole (right) all members of the Dorm Room Council for Howard Plaza Towers, sit in the lobby of the West Towers to sell Candy grams for Valentine's Day. The small tokens of affection were sold to raise money for Resfest. The small messages of love were to "bring the community of the West and East Towers together," North said. The candy grams will be delivered throughout the day.

Valentine's Day Activities Serve Even Those Without Sweethearts

BY ANNIE WHITE
Editorial Assistant

Valentine's Day is Thursday, and students are searching for romantic — or platonic — activities to make this holiday memorable. In addition to buying candy grams, students can choose from selected activities to have a special day.

Poutre' will host their annual "Come and Get Some" Valentine's Day open mic in Blackburn Gallery Lounge

at 7 p.m. This year's show will feature Mocha Hut host, emcee and poet Droopy the Brokeballer and Washington, D.C. singer/songwriter Edith Sodolo. Patrons will receive refreshments for their \$2 admission fee. They are also encouraged to sign up to perform.

Carver Hall's "Infatuation" open mic event will start promptly at 7:30 p.m. in the dormitory's lounge. A Bible study will take place immediately after, and will focus on Jesus' love for humankind.

The College of Engineering Architecture and Computer Science will be sponsoring a Valentine's date auction fundraiser in The Hilltop Lounge. Bids will begin taking place at 7 p.m.

The Gentlemen of Drew Social Club will cater to the ladies in the Blackburn Cafeteria by pouring drinks, standing in line, disposing of trays and placing food orders. These young men, adorned in suits, will also distribute carnations on The Yard.

after Student Activities reports noncompliance.

Kirby said when special cases arise as students struggle to become validated, they could have their case heard and considered by the Policy Board.

Many student leaders are more receptive to the idea of having a board of students to overlook constitutional compliance.

"It would be fine if

there was a cabinet of people," Anozie said. "Power to one person is too much power. It's not distributed evenly."

He said that in the place of just one student holding the Chief of Compliance position, a board that works with a faculty advisor to make sure representatives are adhering to the HUSA Constitution may be more effective.

Kirby said that cur-

rently, many branches of student government are the ones to check student leaders to make sure they are compliant.

There is no constitutional clause in place to replace representatives who are removed from the positions for lack of compliance, nor does a provision exist for the president to appoint someone to fill the position of a removed representative.

Chief: General Assembly Works for Amendments

continued from FRONT, CHIEF

that power to the policy board," said Marcus Ware, HUSA president.

Ware said while many student leaders did not want just one student in charge of power, the idea of having a board to monitor compliance is being considered.

The Policy Board may also serve to resolve issues student leaders are having,

Obama Leads in Delegates

continued from FRONT, PRIMARY

the Democratic Party.

"I have never listened to a presidential candidate who has moved me to do something," Welda Wagstaff said. "I'm missing work today, but it's worthwhile."

Behind the wheel of her own car, Wagstaff volunteered her time and money to Washington, D.C. for Barack Obama, for the senator himself and for the hope of a new America.

"We are a democracy, but we have had two families running everything for how many years now?" she said to a car full of Obama supporters on their way to their assigned block to go door to door.

Wagstaff said the young generation has been complacent up until now. "Your complacency is really built on what you have and have not had to fight for," she said. "I was on the cusp of school integration. You all weren't."

She parked the car and bundled up, sporting an "Obama for President" T-shirt and a hand full of fliers, and helped those activist-minded college students with her to see how it's done.

Almaz Yohanes, a store owner on 14th Street, N.W., received a visit from the canvassers and made it known that she voted at 7 a.m. when the polls opened.

"I voted for Obama because I want to open the door for

my kids and other black people," she said as her reason for voting for the most successful black candidate for the Democratic nomination.

Howard was not the only university in the truly winter weather conditions. More than 20 Georgetown students were out ready to help, including Will Grosswendt, a junior economics major.

"My sister is in Maine and she registered to vote there, walked a mile and a half to caucus," Grosswendt said. "She stayed there in the snow for four hours and walked back in the dark. I felt like that's the least I can do."

'Obama-rama' caught on to the rest of his family, as his parents switched from being registered Republicans to registered Democrats just to vote for Obama.

Lawrence S. Goodwin, a senior legal communications major, led the rally Tuesday, encouraging his peers to walk with him throughout the city.

"I got involved because it's history in the making," he said. "If we don't support each other, who else will?"

According to Goodwin, an Obama win "would solidify the fact that we can do anything that anyone else can do."

"This is our chance to solidify ourselves as a predomi-

nant race not only in the country, but in the world," he said.

While enthusiastic, diverse voters flooded the area, Howard students said the last primary election did not resemble this year's at all.

"This year, we are maybe three times more in-tuned with the election," said Marcus Sample, a senior architecture major. Sample was a freshman when Sean "P.Diddy" Combs was pushing for young people to "Vote or Die."

Sample said that last time, people were more turned off because there was no one looking out for the interests of black people.

"A lot of young people are not really knowledgeable as a whole," he said. "I think people are voting for him because he's black. But they're voting."

Adrianne Mickens, a senior fashion merchandising major, said that, despite why people are voting for Obama, they are voting for him and are ready for change.

"Right now, the view of black America has been tainted," Mickens said as she left the voting station at Meyer Elementary School.

"It's becoming internationally known that we are more than that," Mickens said. "We do have positive influences in the country. America is ready."

Strike Ends, Programming Returns

continued from FRONT, STRIKE

AMPTP studios terminated writers' contracts and switched the normal primetime to a plethora of reality shows.

Consequently, writers will be forced to go out into the work force again to re-establish contracts and ideas that were put on hold.

Some Hollywood cynics believe the strike was not entirely

necessary for the repercussions felt now. NBC Nightly News estimated that the strike affected the entertainment business, entirely, by around \$1 billion.

The biggest concern is that the writers will now be paid substantially lower fees to make up for their digital revenue stake.

So now that the smoke has blown over, viewers can anticipate some of their favorite programs coming back. NBC is

due to bring back shows such as "ER," "The Office," "Saturday Night Live" and "Scrubs." Some shows, like "Heroes," may not be coming back next fall because of production costs.

ABC will bring back "Grey's Anatomy," "Ugly Betty" and "Desperate Housewives" for the remaining spring. CBS also has a couple shows coming back, including "CSI" and "Criminal Minds."



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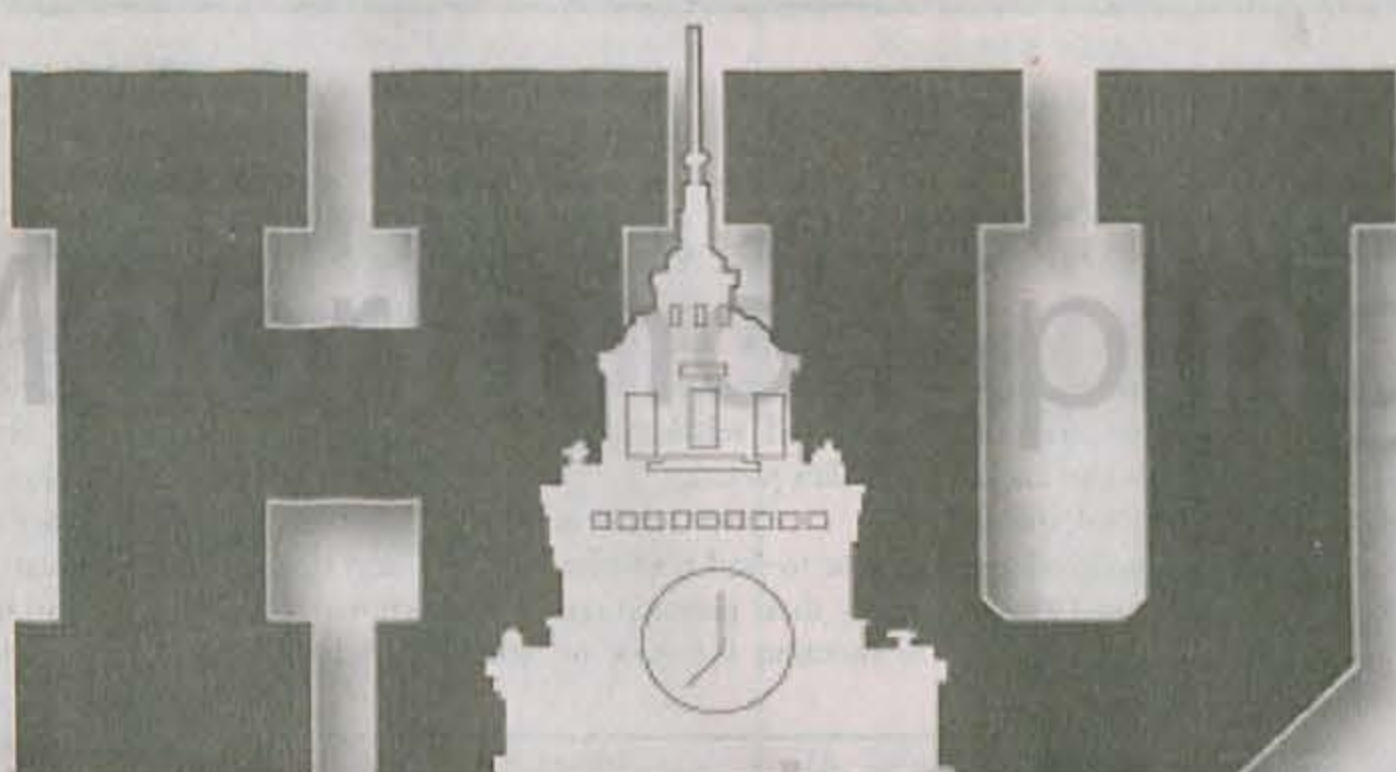
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*The Office of Student Activities is located in the Blackburn Center Suite 117.

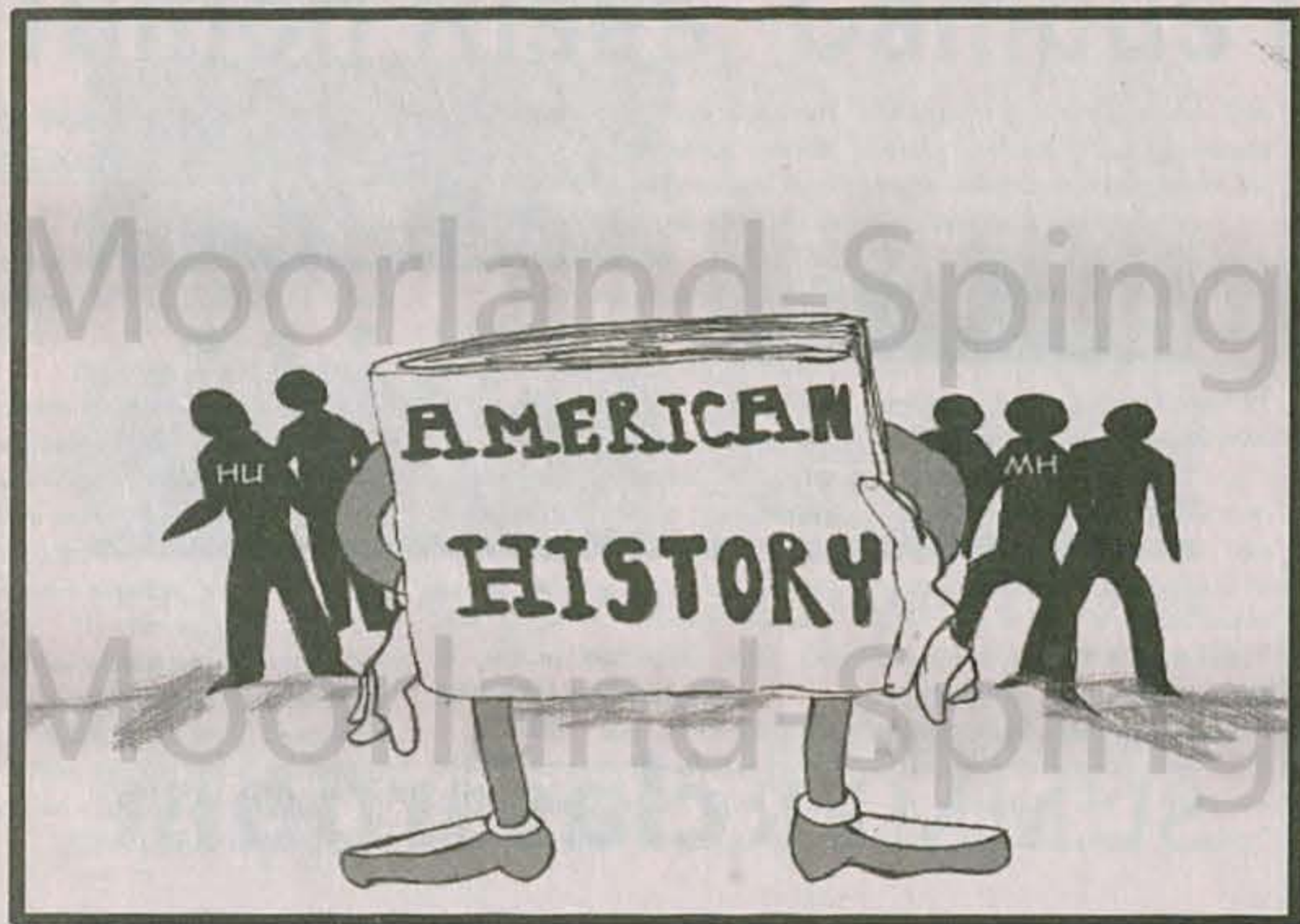
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Marcus Bird - Cartoonist

Will HBCUs Be Extinct by 2016?

The black college experience is like none other. Many who attend HBCUs have complained about the faulty administration and even learning facilities, but in retrospect, they will usually say their four- to six-year undergraduate experience was well worth it.

In addition to the football games, afternoons on the Yard and all the other memories that go along with most HBCU experiences, there is the introduction into the Afrocentric teaching method, the diversity of the people you will meet and the many other learning aspects that extend beyond the classroom.

Unfortunately, many of our Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are in trouble. Many are in financial trouble, others have low enrollment and many have programs that are being attacked for accreditation.

Since our parents' and grandparents' generations, things have changed. HBCUs were originally founded so that black people and white people could have separate learning experiences.

Many of our grandparents attended HBCUs because they were the only colleges that would accept people of color.

Now, many majority col-

leges are begging for students of color, making our decision to attend a black college completely different than the original purpose of HBCUs.

And with the growing popularity of black students attending white schools, it raises the question of whether black colleges will still be relevant in the year 2016.

Although the purpose of HBCUs will continue to evolve, as

even at some of the most prestigious white colleges.

Many parents who attended black colleges and have reached certain socioeconomic statuses are quick to send their children off to white colleges with the thought that they will receive a more "diverse" experience, and many black students run off to white colleges thinking they are receiving a better education because they are among the lighter race.

Either way, realistically, by the year 2016, only a black few colleges will remain important. Granted, many will remain historically important.

But unfortunately, HBCUs will continue to close and continue to struggle financially. By 2016, majority schools and secondary schools' curriculums will have incorporated more "color" into their education, which may also hurt enrollment and support of black colleges.

But it is the responsibility of the alumni and the faculty of these institutions to garner the necessary support. Because in the end, only a few will remain standing.

Let's hope Howard University is one of them.

Our View:
Although the purpose of HBCUs will continue to evolve, they will continue to be relevant in the future.

long as majority schools and the public school system fail to incorporate black history into American history, black colleges will be necessary.

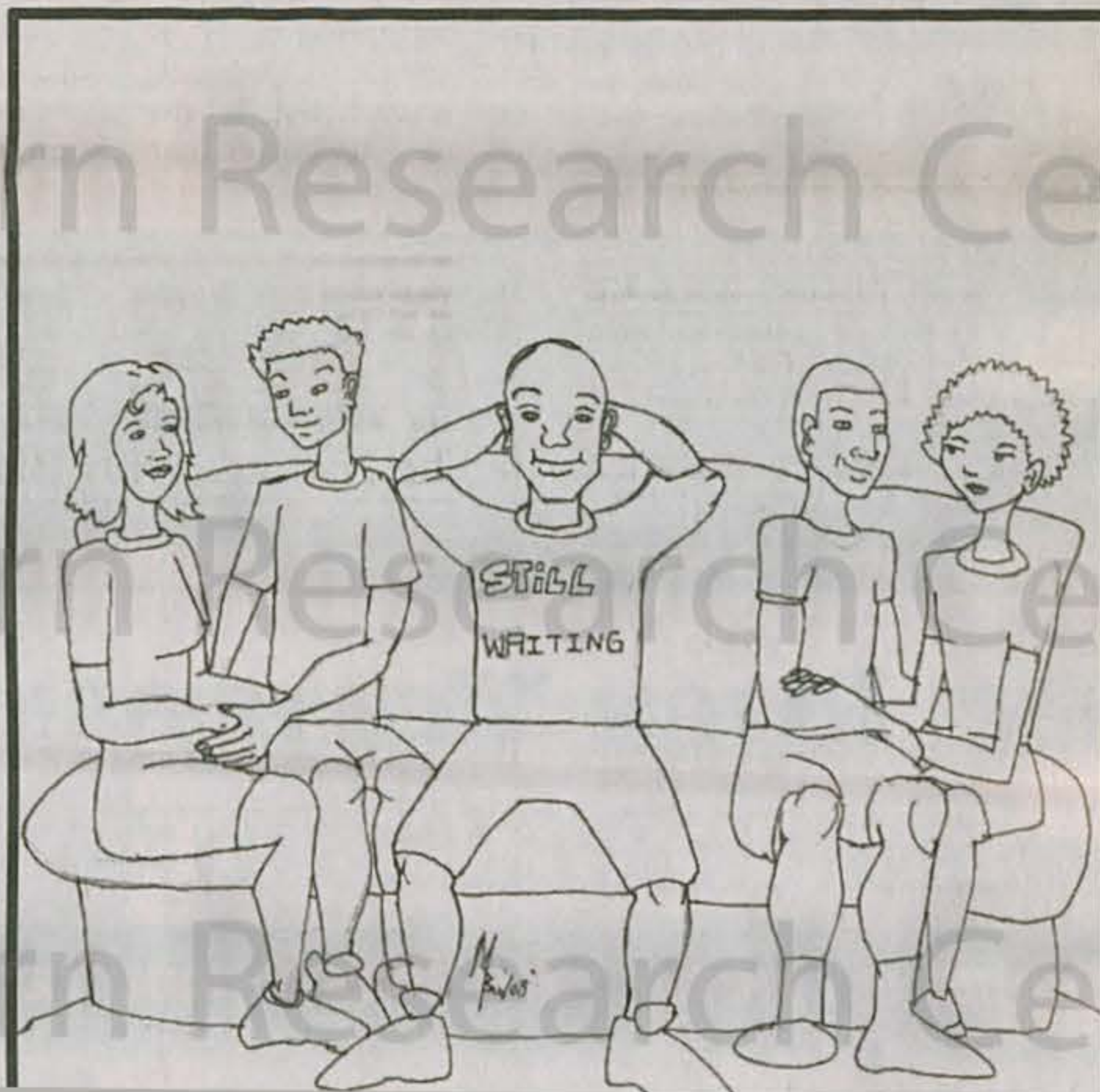
Students who attend Howard, Hampton, Morehouse, Spelman and other institutions of black higher learning acknowledge that the kind of education we are receiving was noticeably absent from their high school education, and in comparison to the curriculum of majority colleges, we realize we are certainly gaining something that others are not,

Daily Sudoku

Directions:

Each row, each column, and each 3x3 box must contain each and every digit 1-9 exactly once.

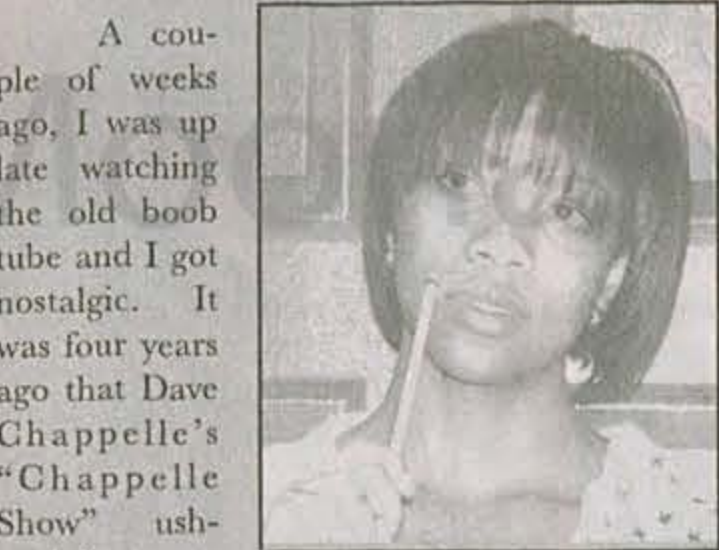
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Got An Issue?
Good!

Genuinely Jolley

The Ombudsman Speaks...



A couple of weeks ago, I was up late watching the old boob tube and I got nostalgic. It was four years ago that Dave Chappelle's "Chappelle Show" ushered in a new era of television with his controversial sketch comedy show.

I remember the feeling I felt every Thursday night when it came on. For that one half an hour, everybody I knew was locked in and watching so we could all relive the laughs Friday morning at school. Ahhh, those were the days.

Now, fast forward four years at Howard, and a couple of Dr. Carr classes later, and I'm ready to re-examine my feelings on this show.

Interestingly enough, my feelings haven't changed THAT much.

Personally, I still think Dave Chappelle is a comedic genius because he presented some of the most biting social commentary of contemporary times to television. Of course, a lot of people missed that because it was presented under the guise of comedy, but it was provocative nonetheless.

However, after much vacillation and debate, I will finally concede that some of his sketches were pure buffoonery and didn't offer anything in the way of deeper thought or analysis.

Like the sketches with Tyrone Biggums — not deep. Funny, but not deep. The reenactment of Charlie Murphy's days in Hollywood with Prince and Rick James were hysterical, but not deep.

Now, the first episode of the first season was deep. Maybe not at first glance, but after careful analysis, you can begin to see the deliberate statement being made by Chappelle.

The episode in question was about a blind black man named Clayton Bigsby. Bigsby didn't know he was black, because he grew up in an all white orphanage in the deep South, and was treated just as the other children were treated. Ironically enough, he became one of the most vocal advocates of racist white supremacy...that is, until he found out he was black.

This sketch, although comically oriented, presents our race-based society with, arguably, its most persistent problem. It shows how illogical and amorphous the concept of racism actually is.

Someone who should be shunned and hated because of the racist beliefs held by white supremacists is instead embraced and praised because these beliefs about black people have been ignored since he, as a black man, shares their same racist mindset.

Sort of like how Hitler came to power, even though his mother was Jewish.

Also, if someone is blind, do they really know the difference between what it means to be black or white or do they just adapt to their environment? How concrete are our ideas about race, if by simply not being able to see, you wouldn't know the difference? Brilliant!

I told you he was a comedic genius.

Of course, this wasn't the only social examination in his infamous two seasons on air. There was the "Real World" sketch where the racial ratio was flipped. Instead of a house full of white people and the token black person, it was reversed...and the drama ensued.

Or, all of the shows that look at what happens when, "keepin it real goes wrong."

Or, the episode with the celebrity trial jury, when the white prosecutor thinks Chappelle is being unreasonable as a juror because he is steadfast in his belief of innocence for famous blacks on trial.

I could go on all day, but you get it. Then, shockingly, abruptly he broke his contract with Comedy Central and it was all over.

I didn't understand why at the time, but applaud him now for what I view as a responsible decision.

I have never interviewed Chappelle, but I surmise that he became uncomfortable with the throngs of white followers he amassed that were laughing at him and not with him as he tried to confront some of America's sociocultural phenomena.

Basically, I think there were people he didn't plan on entertaining who were being entertained for the wrong reasons. Well, that's what I would like to believe anyway.

All hope was not totally lost for me, though.

Alas, Aaron McGruder picked up where Chappelle left off. He very cleverly infused "The Boondocks" with smart allegories and conscious commentary through the characters Huey and Riley.

But I am seeing him head down the same path as Chappelle sadly enough.

South Africa anyone?

Is the Image of Natural Beauty Altered?

Eboni Farmer

To ask whether a black Howard University woman straightens her hair because she wants to become assimilated into mainstream white America is ludicrous... right?

As we celebrate Black History Month, I think there is no better time to address the issues black women may or may not have with their natural roots.

Like many Howard women who first arrive at the university with a fresh relaxer, I now have kinky hair. After much thought and little effort, I decided to cut the relaxer out.

I was tired of going to the hairdresser every week to get my short haircut styled, only to be struggling with it a few days later. I was tired of my stylist over-charging me for a style that I didn't even want or like. I was my hair's oppressor for seven years, and today I am happily nappy.

I have a sense of freedom and my hair can do as it pleases without being forced to be bone straight.

Now, I don't believe that just because my hair is natural, every relaxer should be cut out and every weave should be taken out. It's a personal choice. But, let me tell you — its better than GREAT!!!

I cannot even remember why I was so eager to get a relaxer at the age of 12. Maybe it was because my mother has one. She's beautiful.

Or it might have been that subconsciously, I was exposed to white society's images of beauty, which ultimately made me blind to the beauty of my kinky hair. It had to be my mother's beauty... maybe.

My colleague argued that black women today are not influenced by the European or white societies' standards of beauty. She loves being black, and looking "whiter" to her has never come into question when she gets her relaxer about every six weeks.

A friend of mine told me she relaxed her hair not because she wanted to look white, but because she wanted to look more presentable. Natural hair isn't presentable? I wasn't quite sure how to respond to what I thought was an ignorant claim.

When I think of what my friend said, I think about the little black girl who, in Keri Davis' reenactment of the "doll test" experiment, said she would rather play with a white doll than the black doll, because its "nice."

Does that little girl know how beautiful her black is? And, if not, will she ever know? We may not think we are aspiring to be "whiter," but we have to read between the lines and realize that the history of our hair is a painful one. I speak for myself and there is an underlying meaning to everything that I do in life.

No matter what we do to our hair, we are scrutinized. If you wear your hair natural, you're thought to be making a political statement or to be unprofessional. If you wear your hair relaxed, you're thought to be "selling out" and not being true to your heritage.

In Ann Petry's novel, "The Street," written in 1946, the protagonist, Lutie Thompson, is aspiring for something that she cannot obtain — the white American dream. She is blind and cannot see that no matter how hard she tries, she is black and it will never change.

Are we blind? What is our dream as 21st century black college educated American women? Does it include sitting beside a white woman in corporate America with hair as straight and long as hers?

Ask yourself these questions.

BECAUSE I SAID SO!



... Their Eyes Were Watching God
By Jessica Littles

One of my favorite poets wrote: "Imagination is the bridge between the things we know for sure and the things we need to believe when our worlds become unbearable." This excerpt, taken from a poem by Stacey Ann-Chin, is about revolution in terms of sexuality, calamity and war, but can be applied to anything. And the truth is, love is revolutionary. It has the power to complete and to heal.

It takes courage and power to love, but it is the most universally natural feeling. And the antithesis of love — hate — has the power to destroy. It promotes war, crime and ambivalence. And there is hate all around us. Imagination keeps us sane when the reality of hate and catastrophe becomes too much — in the world and in love.

In fact, love and relationships, in general, really are binary entities — a constant shuffle between what we dream about and what's sitting right in front of us. Even the most cynical of us, who have been burned or perhaps just saw too much, too fast, still secretly hope that true love awaits us.

If we had really given up completely, we wouldn't chase things like money and sex — hoping these things materialize into some form of affection. Even if it isn't our focus for the time being, we still want it to happen one day.

And this is where love stories kick in. Reality is much too harsh to only have it to rely on. And the reality of love is hard work. Correction: relationships are hard work. Even if you love someone, that does not mean you are going to work through the good, bad and ugly, subsequent to the "googly" eyes and the freshness of the initial attraction.

The stories we read about love for ourselves, for our friends, for our art; for our lovers, fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers give us inspiration, insight and even direction. "Their Eyes Were Watching God" will go down in history as one of the best black love stories. The reader watches the book's protagonist, Janie, go through three different relationships, all the while experiencing the maturation and evolution of a young woman. If you've never read it, you should read it.

And though love stories are inspirational, we can't completely rely on them. If we allow our imaginations to run too far, it can be counter-productive. Some of us have stayed in relationships much too long because of what we "imagined" or what we hoped for. Some of us ignore what's right in front of us because we're holding on to a fairy tale. The trick in love and relationships is finding the balance between the potential of what is imagined and the reality of what is right now.

So, if you are one of the very fortunate people who will spend Valentine's Day with a love, then savor every moment. If you don't have a Valentine this year, celebrate for the love stories that do happen and appreciate the love of friends, family and self.

In the mean time, I would suggest you read love stories...and a lot of them. To walk around and pretend that love is unattainable will become...unbearable. I would suggest "Tar Baby" by Toni Morrison and "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Bronte. "Sometimes Rhythm, Sometimes Blues" is a collection of love stories examining relationships between black men and women. That might interest you as well. Enjoy your Valentine's Day and read up. Until next time...

Questions, comments or concerns? Hit me up at e.philltop@gmail.com.

The opinions expressed in the columns on the extended Op-Ed page reflect those of each individual author, not those of The Hilltop Editorial Board.

THE HILLTOP
The Nation's Only Black Daily Collegiate Newspaper

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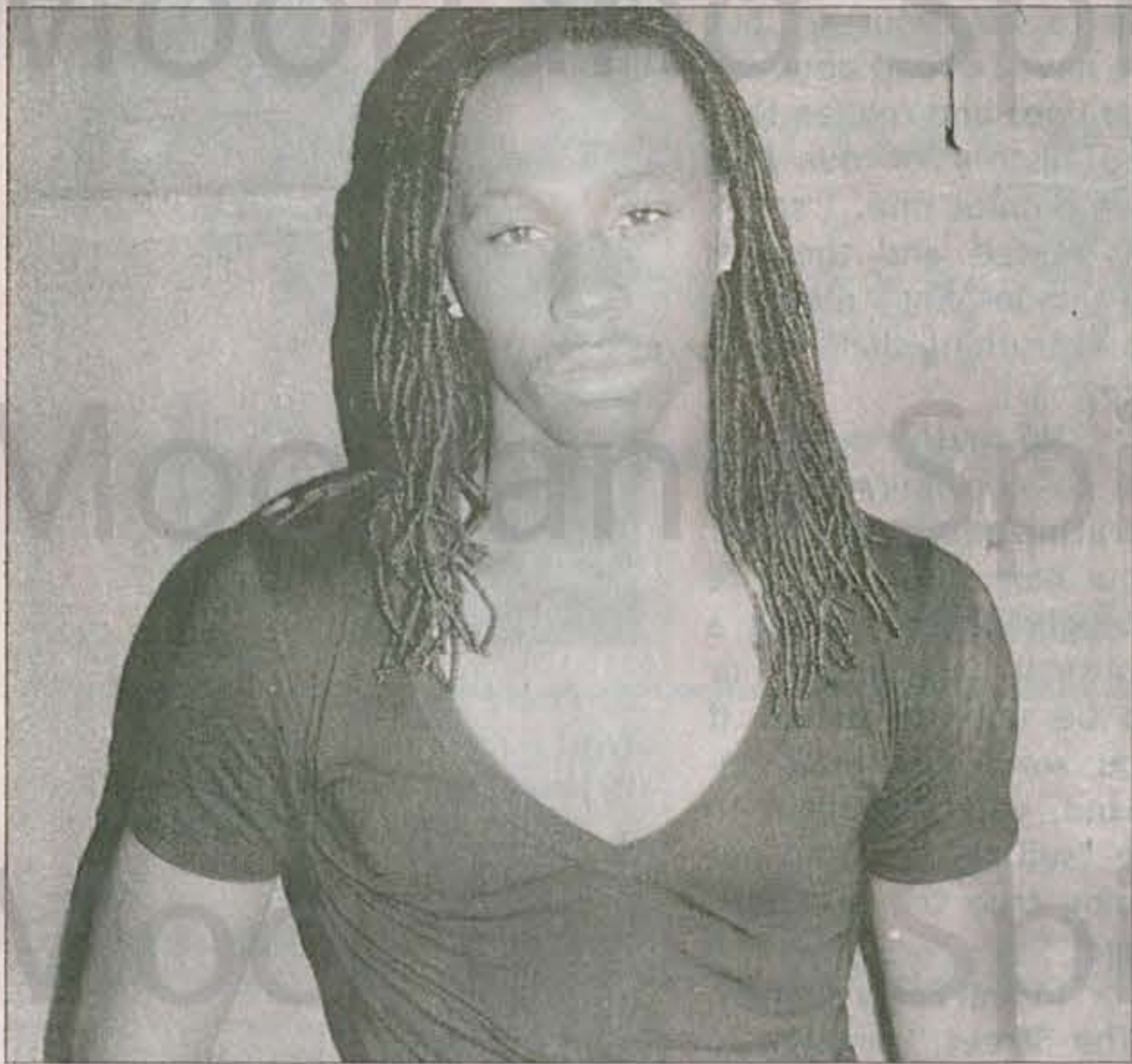
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SIDE

THE HILLTOP

Model Behavior: Students Strut Their Stuff



Some students use modeling as a means of bringing in extra cash. Aside from the added income, modeling helps some stay on track with time management and build their careers.

BY BRITTNEY QUARELS
Contributing Writer

It's pretty much common knowledge that Howard is known for it's fashion, among other things. It's hard to miss the never-ending number of fashion shows and open calls, but where does the title "professional model" come into use? Some Howard students are actually using modeling as a "side hustle" while in school, and setting up possible career paths. "As far as the benefits of modeling while in school, for me, it helps me maintain my schedule," sophomore marketing major Reginald Monroe said. "I manage quite a few modeling jobs as well as being a full-time server at a nearby restaurant. The money is always a plus, no matter how much. But there is no price on the benefit of networking, which is worth more in the grand scheme of

things." While many Howard students engross themselves in every new cycle of Tyra Banks' "America's Next Top Model" or the new Bravo series "Make Me a Supermodel," not everyone can excel in the cut-throat industry of fashion and modeling. "The most exciting show I've probably done would either have to be the Howard Homecoming show in '06, or BET's 'Rip the Runway' in the fall of last year," model and senior graphic design major Casey Crawford said. "I modeled for LRG on 'Rip the Runway,' and have continued to represent them since." Howard alumnus and model David Borrego said, "To become a successful model, it takes hard work. Just like anything in life, you have [to] work hard for what you want. Modeling is a hustle." Borrego said being a model is more than just having

a great face and body. He said modeling encompasses talent, drive, high self-esteem and humility. He had some advice for aspiring models for what it takes to get ahead in this business. "Your body and face is your product now," Borrego said. "So you must make sure that your product has the best look it can possibly have. Make sure you work out, eat six small meals of the right kind of food, properly clean and moisturize your face and reduce your drug alcohol intake." Junior print journalism major and model Naima Ramos-Chapman gave advice and discussed concerns with modeling, especially as a woman. "I know many models who are so anxious about their looks, it becomes very unhealthy," Ramos-Chapman said. "Another thing girls should be wary of is the people ready to take advantage, especially since people assume if you're beauti-

ful, you have to be dumb." Many agencies create scams guaranteeing quick success, money and fame all while slowly draining others' bank accounts. The rule of thumb is usually that anything "guaranteed" is too good to be true. Of course, there are always advantages to the job, including traveling, celebrities and fame. Ramos-Chapman remembered one of her most exciting jobs for Nike. "It was weird, because I was cast without knowing it and got the call," she said. "I did it on the day when the worst blizzard hit New York City, my freshman year at Howard, but it was fun. Very spontaneous." Borrego said, "You get to go to the right places in a city, to the hot spots and be seen. The attention you get from girls is always a plus. Meeting different celebrities is also cool." There are disadvantages in every industry, and fashion

has its fair share. From eating disorders to drug and alcohol abuse, there is always a level of alarm. While modeling is simply a side hustle for some students, others have found that this hobby and talent could be parlayed into a successful career. "As far as modeling, I think I will venture to some open calls to agencies I haven't been to because otherwise, I'll just keep wondering 'what if,'" said Ramos-Chapman, who is currently in New York. Crawford also thinks modeling will fit into his future plans. "I'm looking to move to New York to pursue a career in advertising, design and photography," Crawford said. "Me and the co-owner of eHave Knots Hollis Chin-Kee-Fatti will continue to run our clothing line independently and in select stores. And yes, I will also continue to model on the side for plenty of extra income as well."



Diary of a Mad Black Fashionisto

BY GEORGE LANDER
Contributing Columnist

February 14, Valentine's Day, is a time for lovers (used loosely) to exchange flowers (purchased at your local Giant because he forgot that this isn't a normal Thursday), chocolates (careful now, you gain too much weight he/she won't be around come Feb. 14, 2009), cards (courtesy of Hallmark because his idea of poetic is the same "roses are red" poem from the second grade), and last, but not least, it's a time for you to break out every baby makin song of the past three decades (some of which you were probably conceived on...Shout out to my 80's babies) Now please forgive me if my opening statement makes me sound a little bitter (uh-oh there I go "apol-a-lyin" again), but ladies you know Valentine's Day is usually when that man (?) decides to go M.I.A. (No need to go into hiding fellas, she knew you were broke when she got with you). Or (fast-forward) on Feb. 15 when you see that (NO NAME CALLING!) man sitting across from you in the Punch Out wearing the matching earrings to the necklace he bought you. On a more serious note girl, I know "he yo' man," and you "love" him, and you probably need some last-minute advice on what to get him for Valentine's Day. So I have devoted this week's column to that man (?) of yours and what he really wants for Valentine's Day...You might learn how to keep ya' man by the end:

5) A Southern-style dinner — Honey, you need to cook for that man like you are his Grand-mama (NOT his mama, because she ain't ever gon' like yo' behind anyway).

4) Cuff links — This is a great (tactful) way for a man to wear jewelry. (NOTE: When his earrings are larger than yours (not tactful) it makes me wonder...umm hum)

3) New Playstation game(s) — Do some research so you get the right ones. Talk to his boys if you have to (just talk...Jezebel). You can't just give him the games though (he'll end up spending Valentine's Day with his boys). Ask him to "teach" you how to play the game (trust me, if you don't learn, she will).

2) NBA tickets — Get some Wizards tickets (www.nba.com/wizards) when they're playing his favorite team (a new jersey will get you brownie points too). At the very least, if y'all don't work out, you might snag a pro athlete ("I ain't sayin she a gold digga, but...")

1) Three Letter Word — Jamie Foxx said it's "stronger than any drug, even love"... "All the time" (I know I can't sing). Anyway, go to Victoria's Secret and pick yourself (him) up something really nice. I can't say much more because of decency rules (use your imagination), but PLEASE play safe (HIV is also a three-letter word).

Now for all my single people, don't feel bad honey. Be secure in knowing that no one can love you like you. MUAH! HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY! —Jorge

If you have any comments, suggestions, or you have simply seen someone on campus looking a HOT MESS, or you want to vent about your Valentine's Day, E-mail me george_v_jorge@yahoo.com.

Set to Impress Romantic Valentine's Day



Valentine's Day couples can cozy up to any of these District favorites for an intimate experience.

Tantra Lounge at Indebieu
Where: 707 G Street N.W.
Washington, D.C.
What: A Pink Valentine's Day
Why: Grown and Sexy Decor and donations given to American Heart Association

Bohemian Caverns
Where: 2001 Eleventh Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
What: Singer/Pianist Terrence Cunningham
Why: Good food while being serenaded with jazz

Fire Fly Restaurant
Where: Hotel Madera
1310 New Hampshire Ave N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
What: Five course dinner
Why: Lots of tasty food and Champagne

This Week in Fashion

Bill Blass Names New Creative Director

Saks Fifth Avenue hosted an exclusive dinner Monday to celebrate the inauguration of designer Peter Som as the new creative director at Bill Blass. Som, who is a Parson's graduate, has designed duds for the likes of Michael Kors and Calvin Klein. The talented San Francisco native debuted at Bryant Park in 2001. He joined Bill Blass last summer, overseeing the company's entire women's collection. At the dinner, Som and the swank entourage gathered at New York City's Le Cirque. The guest list included *Vanity Fair's* Vicky Ward and Saks' Senior Vice President Joe Boitano. Som's fall collection for the designer line debuted at last week's Mercedes Benz Fashion Week.

Jewelry House Teams with Denim Designer for Priceless Jean

An Earnest Cut & Sew, the flagship store of designer Scott Morrison, located in the Lower East Side section of Manhattan, unveiled the swanky denim designer's latest concoction, a collabo with French jewelry powerhouse Van Cleef @ Arpels. The two joined forces to craft two blinged-out pairs of jeans. The first pair, valued at \$9,700, are a dark indigo blue stretch denim, and are adorned with the Van Cleef Alhambra clover motif set colorfully in mother-of-pearl and yellow gold. The \$11,300 second pair boasts a light grey shade with the clover motif set in onyx and white gold. With only 10 pairs of jeans projected to be made, each pair will be numbered and signed.

Ferragamo Turns 80

Ferragamo released up-to-date info on the 80th anniversary bash of the Italian design house, which will feature a three-day extravaganza held in China's fashion capital, Shanghai. Scheduled for the end of March, the festivities will conclude with a fashion show and after party on the historic Bund River. An exhibit dedicated to the legendary designer and brand, entitled "Salvatore Ferragamo Evolving Legend 1928-2008," will also be unveiled during the final day's activities at the Museum of Contemporary Art in People's Park. The exhibition will run from March 29 to May 8.

Compiled by Natalie Thompson, Copy Editor

Microsoft Crosses 'Danger,' Gains T-Mobile Sidekick

By LINSEY ISAACS
Editorial Assistant

After a multibillion dollar refusal from Yahoo! Inc. to sell its company, Microsoft Corp. announced a different acquisition with T-Mobile sidekick maker Danger, Inc.

The purchase adds to Microsoft's long list of joint ventures and sales that includes implications of Microsoft's Windows mobile software through more than 50 device makers, run by approximately 160 different mobile operators and phones. The company also added Sony Ericsson on Monday.

Danger Inc. is a Palo Alto, Calif.-based software company formed in 1999 by former Apple Inc. executives who now work for Google, Microsoft's biggest competition.

Danger's 10 years of experience in the software field motivated Microsoft to pick up the company, with promises of innovative cellular technology in the near future.

"Danger continues to provide an effortless and fun mobile experience for consumers," Henry R. Nothhaft, chairman and CEO of Danger Inc., said in a statement. "Now by combining our uncompromised application software and powerful back-end service with Microsoft, we can expand our innovative service offerings even further and take mobility to a new level."

The financial terms of the deal were not disclosed. However, buying Danger will help improve Windows Mobile licenses sales to more than \$20 million this year, almost double the sales made in 2007, experts say.

Obtaining some control over the production of the T-Mobile Sidekick will also help Microsoft compete against leading PDA manufacturer BlackBerry. According to Robbie Bach, Entertainment and Devices division President of Microsoft, drastic changes to the Sidekick should not occur.

"There's no implied change in any of [the Sidekick's] direction," Bach said at Mobile World Congress 2008 in Barcelona, Spain. "If anything, the combination of Microsoft and Danger gives us the opportunity to expand that business both in terms of geographies and operator relationships."

Rumors of a "Zune phone" and other Windows components being placed on the Sidekick have circulated in various outlets after the announcement of the acquisition. While some consumers may worry about the possible changes that would be made to the mobile device, many students welcome it.

"It would be a good advancement," said freshman pre-pharmacy major Gassandre Cassamajor, an owner of the Sidekick LX. "Putting Windows Mobile and Word Document on [the Sidekick] would make the phone better."

Bach expressed concerns for overlapping Windows Mobile and Danger's technology at the confer-



Microsoft announced its partnership with Danger, Inc., the maker of the T-Mobile sidekick. Microsoft predicts that the acquisition will widen their appeal to a younger demographic.

ence, but the company might not use all of Danger's "interface innovation." Though the acquisition will not be final until the end of the year, Microsoft is confident in gaining

another venture.

"We believe wherever you go, your phone should bring your world with you," Bach said. "Microsoft will build upon our current offerings to business users

by delivering a whole new range of experiences to mobile consumers. And we have the broadest partnerships, the finest people and the best software and services to get us there."

Subprime Mortgages Affect Student Loans

By LINSEY ISAACS
Editorial Assistant

The threat of the subprime mortgage crisis may cause stricter guidelines for borrowing private student loans and an increase in interest rates in the near future.

Recent reports by *FinAid* as well as the College Cost and Reduction Access Act of 2007 indicated the likelihood of minimum balances for debt consolidations increasing, and a decrease in the availability of private loans for students.

"The issue currently affecting current home owners has nothing to do with current and future [federal] student loan borrowers," Financial Aid Interim Director Marcus DeCosta said. "Since the majority of loans come directly from the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program, interest rates will begin to affect those students upon repayment graduation."

A boost in defaults and foreclosures within the past two years resulted from the

credit crisis and the heavy influence of subprime borrowers, whose high borrowing risks and history of bad credit may have altered the lending system.

Subsequently, looser credit procedures have been in effect for lending companies. Attempting to revamp their systems, credit lenders are beginning to make it more difficult for individuals with fair credit to get mortgages.

The mortgages are transferred to trusts, with shares being sold to trust funds and securitized for an array of services, including funding student loans.

However, investors are not funding the securitization of these loans due to the uncertainty which comes along with an increase in defaults.

As a result of these changes, major private student loan companies have noticed the potential negative affects of this crisis. Sallie Mae, a leading provider of student loans, filed with the Securities and Exchange



The subprime mortgage crisis may result in stricter guidelines for borrowing private students loans and an increase in interest rates for the loans.

Commission their plans to become discerning in granting student loans.

"In response to the [College Cost and Reduction Access] Act and market conditions, we plan to be more selective in pursuing origina-

tion activity, in both FFELP loans and private education loans," the company wrote in their file. "In addition, we plan to curtail less profitable student loan acquisition activities such as spot purchases and wholesale consolidation

loan purchases, which will reduce our funding needs."

The company did not specify how they would tighten their procedure in granting student loans.

Additionally, the minimum balance for debt consolidation may be increased to approximately \$10,000 and interest rates are speculated to increase up to 1 percent. Private lenders could also push for borrowers to pay their interest while they are still in school, or else increase it once a student has graduated.

"It's going to be nearly impossible and harder for students to pay interest while in school," said sophomore psychology major Justice Woods, one of many students on campus who has federal loans. "It's hard enough handling a part-time job, and it will take students longer to finish school. Less people will attend school in the regular four-year time frame."

Many students rely on the Pell Grant to supplement their funding for school, in addition to federal loans. As of now, federal loans will not be impacted much by subprime woes.

"[The Pell Grant] is the reason I'm in school," Woods said. "If they can increase the money for it, it may refute the problem with loans."

Though the College Cost and Reduction Access Act would increase funding for Federal Pell Grants by \$11.4 billion over the next five years, resources for this funding have been poorly provided and do not account for the total cost.

Subsidies paid by the government to promote lenders to offer federal education loans have been cut, so students may find it tougher to get student loans in the near future, according to *FinAid*.

Since the crisis will primarily affect private loans, students are advised to stick with federal loans and only consider a private loan if all other options are exhausted.

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Sssh... We're Not Supposed to Talk About This

I was a page and a half into writing this perspective on the presidential campaign, on the debates, the rally and what I see happening around Howard, when I was asked what I thought about our generation. To be precise, I was directly asked why I thought our generation wasn't as socially active as Howard used to be. I paused. If you remember, the last person to say HU wasn't as socially active as it once was got a protest down to the Washington Post...I equivocated.

"It's just a different time in our history," I began. "And Howard is still the Howard it always has been," I concluded. As the day grew longer, that statement began to bother me. Is Howard still the most prominent HBCU? Or does the real HU boil down to a football game we can't seem to win? What is our impact on society? And, what is the status of our generation? I frowned.

To say that we are the old Howard isn't fair to older alumni or any of the greats our buildings are named after...but I'm not too sure that we're suppose to talk about this.

What is the status of our black generation? We are dying. We are selling ourselves deeper and deeper into mental slavery as the days go on and each generation gets older. BET—enough said.

FACE: For every one Howard student in New Orleans, there are two to three students in Miami.

Now I know we're not supposed to talk about THIS! Hurricane Katrina touched down and obliterated sections of New Orleans and Alabama. The aftermath of the hurricane and the length of time our people were left to fend for themselves in the jungle made Katrina the single greatest injustice to affect a mass number of our people in our generation.

Kanye West went on national television and said that the President of The United States did not care about black people. For the next few days his comments were the topic of all the classrooms and the media, but when time came for young black people to show they cared about black people...where were we?

Isn't it ironic that our generation will follow behind a 35-year-old entertainer (Jay-Z) when he says that he doesn't wear sports jerseys because he is 30 plus. But when he titles a song "Minority Report" and speaks on the ills of Hurricane Katrina, nobody moves.

When he brings fresh water to African villages, those same fans aren't motivated. Look at how our campus dealt with Jena "6." Wait...am I allowed to talk about this? We filled up Cramton Auditorium, we chanted, we stood on seats, we were mad as hell — or so it seemed.

HUSA President Marcus Ware, who I find to be one of the most capable people to have held the position in recent memory, spoke on the importance of the fight. He pleaded with the captivated crowd to not make this simply the "fashionable" cause of the day. Literally, fashionable...those t-shirts were hot right? Everybody wanted one. But the very next day, you would have thought those kids weren't locked up anymore. This is modern-day Howard.

It is an outrage that in an election year that is so historic for multiple reasons, everyone on campus who wants to vote isn't registered to vote. With all the state clubs on campus and networking capabilities of many of organizations, registering the entire school to vote isn't out of our means. But, I digress.

We held a campaign rally in front of Cramton and the turnout broke my heart. Volunteers worked tirelessly to put up flyers, make phone calls and exceed their text message limits to get people out. In the end, we sent a few buses out to campaign in

He Said... She Said

Viewpoints from Both Sides of the Gender Divide

\$17.02 billion.

Despite the subprime lending crisis, interest rates and high gas prices, among other factors that negatively affect our nation's struggling economy (arguably a recession), cupid is still projected to pull in billions tomorrow.

Yep, according to the National Retail Federation (NRF), Americans are expected to drop \$17.02 billion for Valentine's Day spending.

That breaks down to roughly \$123 per person, and in broke college student terms, that's a grip. Needless to say, that money could be better spent elsewhere besides this Hallmark holiday.

And, of course, men spend disproportionately more, nearly twice as much as women, according to a survey conducted by BGRsearch.

I'm guessing it's the journalist in me, or my curious and inquisitive inner-child, but for some reason I'm left asking why?

Why do Americans shell out so much of their hard-earned money for a so-called holiday that was basically contrived by businesses (namely Hallmark) in order for them to make some extra cash in the doldrums between the holiday season and Easter?

Why do people invest so much in a specified day of love when our loved ones should be appreciated daily, like The Hilltop (shameless plug)?

Why do we as college students clean out our pockets to fill Cupid's, instead of saving to pay off our student loans?

Lastly, why do so many members of the fairer sex suffer from VD? No, not that. I'm talking about Valentine's Depression. Valentine's Depression (VD) is a form of SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder, see Feeling SAD: Season Affective Disorder from Oct. 13, 2005). I'm sure you've seen the warning signs; a girl who is perfectly normal for 51 weeks of the year slips into a somber and bitter mood leading up to, and immediately following, Feb. 14. Ladies, there's nothing wrong with being single on Valentine's Day, especially if it doesn't get to you on the other 364 remaining days of the year. Valentine's Day is no indicator of how much one is loved, it has no true roots in an honest celebration of affection, and definitely has no divine charter—yet, this day is held in such a high regard and awarded so much reverence.

Again, I ask why? I know this sounds cliché but the sentiments of Valentine's Day should be celebrated not just on a single day but rather throughout the entire year. Like André 3000 said, "Happy Valentine's Day — everydays the 14th!" And tell Cupid to get his hand out of your pocket!

Submit your topics for discussion to meccanisms@gmail.com.

This week's issue:

Valentine's Day

by Joshua Thomas & Jada Smith

According to the Encyclopedia, the word "holiday" comes from the words "holy" and "day," and was originally reserved for special religious days. Christmas, Easter, Hanukkah and Ramadan are a few of the religious holidays that come to mind. But then there are other non-religious, important holidays we as Americans observe, like Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, New Years, the list goes on.

For each one, I can think of at least one reason why that specific holiday is significant and why we continue to observe it...the same can not be said for Valentine's Day.

Guys, I'm sure you're thinking that V-Day is one of those days when all the women in the world expect to be showered with gifts and attention from their boos, but I firmly stand behind the many women who think Valentine's Day is a fluke. I have quite a few female friends who turn in to the modern day Scrooge at the mere mention of Feb. 14.

Two of my guy friends have lamented to me over the phone about how broke they are for Valentine's Day, and that they were worried about how their girlfriends would react when she doesn't get the "Diddy's girl" Valentine's Day of her dreams. Why do we celebrate a day that makes people, on both sides of the gender spectrum, feel either miserable and hostile, or worried and panicky?

Granted, committed relationships are scarce on Howard's campus. But if you really care about someone, you shouldn't have to be forced into showing them by enacting national law in the form of a "holiday." Guys, trust me, you can make everyday a special day for your girl by simply showing her that you care. I think maybe if men did that more often, women wouldn't make such a big deal over the 14th anyway, I promise.

And as far as Valentine's Day and Howard University are concerned, I'm going to take a wild guess and say that most of the people I know that go to Howard are not in relationships. I'm going to make another estimation and say that many of us Howardites do not have disposable funds to buy each other gifts (because all of our money goes towards being fly, lets be honest).

And I'll take another shot in the dark and just say that you probably don't even remember what you got for Valentine's Day last year. So lets be honest with ourselves, Valentine's Day has little significance and shouldn't even be considered a holy day...I mean holiday.

GIPPY

By Johnnie Walker



one of the closest elections of our time. It doesn't speak to the efforts of Students for Barack Obama. It doesn't even speak to the support for the Senator, but it speaks to this modern-day Howard. In the 1960s, Martin Luther King spoke about a Dream. In 1988, Michael Jackson brought himself to tears singing about looking at the "man in the mirror," and asking him to change his ways. In 2008, Barack Obama is saying that YES, WE CAN do it. We have forgotten why our grandfathers risked getting brutalized by police, attacked by dogs and sprayed by fire hoses.

We've looked left and looked right, and have forgotten about our friends who used to fill those seats and have lost their way during this Howard struggle...WE MUST TALK ABOUT THIS! We saw a young black woman and her daughter holding a cardboard sign on Florida Avenue that said "HOMELESS AND HUNGRY WITH 4-YEAR-OLD," and we almost crashed. In America, if you work and you follow the rules, you should at least be able to shelter your child and put food in her stomach. You should, at the very least, be able to walk around with your head held high and not feel so destitute and hopeless about tomorrow, as many walking around this city do.

At Howard, student insurance should not change to limit the amount of visits they will cover in a year, so that again the poor and uninsured have serious decisions to make between rent, tuition, food and healthcare. Tuition around here is being raised, while desks are falling to pieces and ceilings are collapsing, and university workers aren't getting paid. WE MUST TALK ABOUT THIS! If you are a student

with a genuine desire to go to school and you can't afford it, you should be able to go and you should get some help doing so.

Mothers should not have to rob Peter just to pay Paul, and sometimes H.P. Swygert. It is an outrage and WE HAVE TO TALK ABOUT THIS. Howard was started in order to give blacks a place to advance thought and society as a whole. The intention was to have an army of capable professionals stepping out into the world and grabbing a hold of the strings instead of being puppets, or worse — slaves.

From the hustler on the corner to the student hustler working two jobs and still maintaining that GPA, to the student being hustled by the bookstore, we are all fighting the same fight. We all have friends and family who won't or don't believe that they will make it in life. And we all know what it's like to feel as if we are venturing out of the cave and into the wilderness to find help or food, and to have those same loved ones waiting for us to return with a plan. This is why this moment in history is so important. Barack Obama isn't just a black man, and this isn't just a presidential campaign.

This is us breaking free for the North; but this time we are not alone. This is us finally acknowledging King's dream, where we unite together and dare someone to deny us. This is where the elitists join the privileged (all of us are privileged to be here) to reach back and pull forward. This is where students like us give an hour of our time to mentor a local child because someone at home may not be doing so. This is the moment in history when, for once in our lifetime, we have enough faith in ourselves to be-

lieve that we are strong enough to lead this country, and to finally change the status quo. For too long, we've stood for nothing, so we have been falling for any and everything and my friends, THE TIME IS NOW.

Our professor asked us to imagine Howard in 10 years. I cringed. Then I bumped into Nick Owen last night. I always enjoy our talks. I was sharing with him some of my concerns about Howard University as it stands, and telling him that I didn't know what could be done about it. This brother looked me in my eye and shared with me a perspective and a vision for Howard that made me wish I was a freshman again. When we parted, I remember thinking that he should run for another office after his School of "C" term is done...maybe there is hope yet.

DISCLAIMER: Before my Facebook box gets filled up, or my house gets egged — I am not, in any fashion, saying that there is something wrong with vacationing for spring break. But it is fair to ask, what time have we given to others outside of ourselves? We work hard throughout the year and deserve some R&R. Trust me, I know. I love Howard, or else I would have transferred. I am also acutely aware that my lifestyle is far from perfect and my views do not have immunity from criticism. I do not have all the answers, and of course know that I myself can do more.

And to the person reading this and thinking that because they have had an experience that contradicts one of my "We do not..." statements, you too are missing the point. Most of the statements made do not apply to me personally, as I have two tours of duty in New

Orleans among other things. I say "WE" because we are only as strong as our weakest link, or as smart as the most ignorant of us.

To be clear, I do not think that the social ills of the world are solely on the shoulders of Howard students, nor can we change the world in a single day.

Of course, we aren't as socially active as we were in the 60s. How can we be? They had the civil rights era. But, it is still fair to ask ourselves, what will Howard be like in 10 years if we don't grab hold of the vicious cycle plaguing our people and at least try to slow it down? What do we care about? I am not trying to tell anyone what they should care about or value.

If someone feels that the most important issue is that Beyonce wears too much fur and they want to save the animals...that's cool.

It's also okay if someone feels that raising pay for teachers is the most pressing issue of the day. But we have to ask ourselves, what do we stand for as a generation? And, there is always the person to ask anyone standing in opposition. "Well if you are so great, what have you done?" And my response is, I have not ran for elected office, so it's fair to ask, where are our student leaders?

And whenever an issue of substance is taking place on campus, where are the members of all of these prominent organizations and their armies? I wish we had more time to talk about that! (laughing).

- Sonny Jackson, Co-chair of Students for Barack Obama

CLASSIFIEDS

The *Hilltop* prints *Hilltopics* every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The first 20 words are \$10 and .25 for each additional word.

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Where are you going to live? Educational Housing Services, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that serves the housing needs of students and interns in New York City. EHS has multiple properties available for summer 2008! We will be on campus to answer all of your questions next week!
Location: Howard University, Blackburn Center, Level G
Date: February 13th, 2008
Time: 10am-3pm
Visit us online at: www.studenthousing.org

ATTENTION STUDENTS INTERESTED IN BUSINESS MANAGMENT!
The application deadline for The *Hilltop* Newspaper Business Manager position for the 2008-2009 school year has been extended to Friday, February 15, 2008. If you would like to learn about the position, email inquiries to "Ashley" at hilltopbusiness@gmail.com

Interested in Volunteering with the *Declaration of Truth* Campaign???

Email Joy Lindsay at joylindsay@gmail.com
Include name, classification, and t-shirt size.

"Discover the *Truth* with Joy Lindsay as your future Undergraduate Trustee"

Poutré Presents ...
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Love, Hate, and Erotic Poetry
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ATTENTION ALL MODELS AND FASHION DESIGNERS!!!

Target H.O.P.E. is having an open model and designer call TODAY from 6-8pm in the Annex seminar room.
Models should wear fitted t-shirts, women please bring heels.
Designers please bring pictures of your clothes.

Joy Lindsay
Declaration of Truth for Undergraduate Trustee

Vote March 6, 2008
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Circle K
General Body Meeting today at 7pm in Douglas Hall

116.
Come pick up club t-shirts! We will announce the new e-board!

PEAC
(formerly known as HU Amnesty International)
is hosting "Gentrification in DC" @ 7pm Today in Founders Library Browsing Room

Golden Key
Valentines Day Fundraiser
Feb 8, 11 - 14 @ 10am - 4pm in Lower Blackburn
PLEASE DROP OFF SCHOOL SUPPLIES to donate towards GK School Supplies Drive 2008!